

*Paxton Municipal Light Department*  
*578 Pleasant Street*  
*Paxton, MA 01612-1300*  
*Light Commission Meeting*  
**June 15, 2021**

- I. Call to order: The meeting was called to order by Chairman Wheeler at 5:32 p.m. Members present: Emerson Wheeler, Yvette Orell, Mike Benoit, and Tara Rondeau, Manager. Public Attending: None.
- II. Approval of Agenda: Orell motioned to approve the agenda; Benoit seconded. Motion passed 3-0.
- III. Approval of Minutes: Benoit motioned to approve the May 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021 minutes; Orell seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0.
- IV. Public Comment: None
- V. Managers' Report:
  - A. Operations and Electrical Systems Updates:
    1. The linemen continued trimming and chipping. They have completed Brigham Road and are currently working on Nanigan Road.
    2. They:
      - a. Fixed the primary wire on Pole #68 West St.
      - b. Removed the lease light in the parking lot of St. Columba Church, per the customer's request.
      - c. Set a new pole on Suomi Street for new construction.
      - d. Fixed a streetlight on Pole #35 Pleasant St.
      - e. Fixed a blown fuse on Grove St at pole #85.
      - f. Changed out a pad transformer on Shenandoah Drive.
      - g. Ran a new underground house service on Shenandoah Drive.
      - h. Removed an off-peak meter on Grove St.
      - i. Pulled old poles on West St. and Spring St. after Verizon moved their services over to the new poles.
      - j. Checked on a power issue at Kettle Brook Golf Course that turned out to be internal.
      - k. Replaced broken ground wire on Village Dr. A person weed whacking took it out.
      - l. Replaced a failing meter on Village Dr.
      - m. Removed trees from lines on Holden Rd and Pleasant St.
      - n. Upgraded primary wire on Davidson Rd.
    3. The linemen installed the EV charger station signs at AMC to complete the requirements of the state grant.
    4. They moved the trailer from the substation to the garage to make room for the generator being delivered by Milton Cat.

5. The linemen hung the bunting on the Town Hall for Memorial Day and later took it down.
6. They participated in a pole top rescue safety meeting in Holden.
7. Assisted the AC repairman down the substation. During the May heat wave, the second AC unit was struggling to perform. It was determined that it needed a new thermostat and fan.
8. 2 of the linemen completed their online portion of their CPR renewal.
9. The foreman gave a tour of the substation and peaking generator to the Fire Dept.
10. They brought the old pickup truck to JJ Kane in Shrewsbury to be auctioned off.
11. Outages:
  - a. May 28<sup>th</sup>: affected 13 customers on Highland St and Center Dr. A fuse blew on poles #1 and #3 caused by overgrowth that melted the bird cage and made a wet branch go phase to ground. The outage lasted an hour.
  - b. June 8<sup>th</sup>: a transformer needed to be replaced affecting customers on Upper Highland St and Center Dr. The outage lasted 1.5 hours.

B. Office and Operations:

1. The office staff has been working on getting the new rates changed over in the billing system.
2. PMLD's accounts receivable 90 days past due balance is \$32, 464. Last year at this same time it was \$59, 570.
3. Due to manufacturing delays caused by COVID, Landis & Gyr is having a hard time getting the modular chips needed for their gateways. The AMI meter install is on hold for now. The first gateway is projected to be in the end of July.
4. We are waiting on AMC to get the EV charging parking spots properly marked before submitting the paperwork to the state for reimbursement through the grant. They require pictures of the spots fully completed and compliant.
5. FY22:
  - a. The town's annual streetlight costs have decreased by 6%
  - b. The safety office detail rate is increasing \$1 to \$50 an hour
  - c. PMLD's billing for the water dept. increased 5.5%.
6. The signed rate schedules have been sent to the DPU and a legal notice was placed in the T&G on June 14-16<sup>th</sup>.
7. While working on the rate changes, it was discovered that there are 2 older lights on the common, outside the First Congregational Church that are not being billed to anyone and are not part of the Town's streetlights. The board told the manager to add it the streetlight list as a NC, they were probably installed in the 70's or 80's.
8. This Thursday, the manager is being sworn in to the MMWEC Board of Directors. While at MMWEC the manager will meet for the second time with their team to go over the Governors Climate Bill and it's impact to PMLD.
9. The Phone at the City line has been added to our existing government contract dropping

the monthly payment by \$14.

10. The manager submitted a reimbursement schedule to MMWEC for the retirees benefits through the OPEB Trust. Before doing so, the manager spoke with the actuary and auditors to ensure that this was a wise move. All agreed.

C. Financials March 2021:

March revenue increased from February by \$6,326. This is primarily due to an increase in AMC's usage. PMLD's purchase power costs decreased by \$31,779. Other non-operating income shows a loss for March this is due to quarterly investment losses on funds held with the Treasurer. PMLD's overall net income increased by \$5,151 from February.

Just a reminder, the WRRC bill is due in June for \$197,761.

D. MMWEC Project Updates: Millstone Unit 3 will be starting a scheduled forced outage that is expected to last for ten (10) days. They will be replacing a reactor coolant pump seal. This pump was not scheduled to be changed until April 2022 but due to the extreme temperatures of late, the decision was made to do it now. There are no other project updates.

E. Substation Generator: The Generator was delivered on May 25<sup>th</sup>. During the predicted peaks each month, MMWEC will remotely start the generator to lower our peak. It was first started on May 26<sup>th</sup>, during the heat wave. The first remote start, failed and had to be done manually by the linemen. The second day, the unit overheated. The techs at Milton Cat were able to get it under control in time for the May peak. They have been great to work with going above and beyond. To date, the generator has run four (4) times which is almost how often it ran all of last summer. Sterling has been experiencing similar issues as Paxton with their rented generator.

F. Roadmap to 2050/NetZero: The manager had a Zoom meeting with MMWEC to discuss PMLD's current power portfolio, it's sources and rating for carbon vs. non-carbon emitting power sources. We went over projections and options available to PMLD. They offered suggestions on future projects and suggested the Board set goals and provide a direction that they would like to see PMLD take in the near future regarding more non-carbon emitting portfolio options. Assuming no spikes in electrical consumption, PMLD is ahead of the curve and set through 2035. Since the Governors roadmap also calls for more electrification to reduce carbon emissions, that assumption is most likely not going to be valid in the upcoming years.

In 2020, 56% of PMLD's sales were non carbon emitting: 13% from Millstone, 34% from Seabrook, 9% from NYPA and .31% from Hydro Quebec. Berkshire Wind made up 7% of our sales, but since we sell our recs the state does not count our sales as non-carbon emitting. If we wanted that 7% to count as non-carbon emitting, we would need to retire our recs. MMWEC will provide us with some scenarios and options as well as financial impacts if we chose this option.

The current push is for offshore wind. MMWEC is in negotiations with a company for their offshore generation. They will provide us with more info when they have it.

If we chose to not make any changes to our power portfolio in the near future, we could continue to work on shaving our peaks and lowering our transmission costs through the use of a generator. To reduce capacity costs, batteries are an option.

We also need to consider the fact that if everyone starts purchasing electric vehicles or installing mini-split heat pumps, PMLD will need to make upgrades to its overall system in terms of transformers, etc. We will need more capacity and our demand will increase.

## VII. Other Business:

A. PMLD had voted to hold off on utility shutoffs for nonpayment until July 1<sup>st</sup>. Do we want to stay with that date? Everyone was in agreement.

B. Some municipalities are starting a "Renewable Energy Rate" that customers can voluntarily contribute a set amount each month that is earmarked for purchasing clean energy (reCs) at the end of the year. The Board will watch how this rate is accepted by the customers at other munis.

C. Benoit motioned that PMLD skip the July meeting, as has been practiced in the past. Orell seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0.

VIII. Adjourn-Benoit motioned to adjourn, Orell seconded the motion. Motion passed 3-0.

The meeting adjourned at 6:24 pm.

The Next Meeting is August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 5:30 pm.

Approved Minutes Submitted on behalf of the Paxton Light Commission

by Tara Rondeau on 8/10/21 Tara Rondeau

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